ST XAVIER'S COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS)
PALAYAMKOTTAI TN

SWOC ANAYLSIS REPORT ON
THE ACADEMIC AUDIT *CUM* PRE-NAAC VISIT
11 -12 January 2016

STRENGTHS

As a Jesuit Institution, St Xavier's College is dedicated to higher learning in order to equip the first generation students to be agents for social change, to live as proud citizens endowed with concern, compassion and conscience.

1. St Xavier's College finds its strength in being an age old Jesuit Institution having been the pioneer in educational service for 93 long years with unparallel heritage, reputation and exclusive ethos of its own. The college is known for academic excellence tempered by social concern aiming to prepare the youth as leaders in every walk of life.

2. The College has been *AUTONOMOUS* for past **29** years that has allowed them to be innovative and creative in designing their CBCS-based curriculum and evaluation patterns.

3. The College has been *NAAC – ACCREDITED* for 12 years with three completed cycles each with good score.

4. SXC has been an accredited "*COLLEGE WITH POTENTIAL FOR EXCELLENCE*" and is aiming to become "College with Excellence" in the short-term.

5. The Science departments are funded by *DBT-STAR* College Scheme. This on its own brings in quality in teaching and learning at the UG level. The recognition by the DBT, India is a great honour in deed!

6. ICT enabled teaching has been in vogue, *albeit* at base level, supplemented by the use of smart boards, E-contents and various other tools and approaches.

7. College has established Postgraduation and research in most departments. A higher percentage of the faculty is highly experienced and who also seriously engage in research along with teaching. The faculty are organizing colloquia - seminars, workshops and conferences (State level, National level and some International).

8. There are 20 *RESEARCH CENTERS* engaged in basic as well as specialised fields, some funded by Central agencies. Their research findings are published in peer reviewed research journals.

9. The college is involved in continual education endeavours like conducting add-on courses, certificate courses, soft skills and bridge courses.

10. Many departments offer consultation services to needy neighbours.

11. In order to inculcate the set value system the institution thrives to train the youth with a *service learning* through *STAND* - the Outreach mode.

12. A plethora of activities has been on by various units and associations. The Hostel deserves a special mention for the creative way of having designed a student-friendly ambiance.

13. SXC's strong determination towards a *PREFERENTIAL OPTION FOR THE MARGINALIZED* is equally matched by the various scholarships the students could avail.

14. Last but not the least; SXC is blessed with the multifaceted and dedicated faculties who volunteer to shoulder additional responsibilities that support the administration of the college.

OPPORTUNITIES

1. **HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT:**
   You may design the academics such that you wisely make use of the faculty's expertise shared among related Courses and Programmes (within the College), so that the students get the best out of them.

   Consultancy given to others can be charged and recorded so that the money generated can be used for maintenance of instruments and other miscellaneous works.

2. **MINOR PROJECTS / SEMINARS / WORKSHOPS / CONFERENCES**
   Newly joined staff can be motivated to write proposals for minor projects, seminars, workshops and conferences. UGC every year announces for the same even for the Management (Self Supporting Courses).

3. **CONSCIENTIZATION ABOUT COMPETITIVE EXAMINATIONS (UG Level)**
   There are many competitive exams conducted for undergraduate students for integrated PhD programme and master's programme nationally. Motivate and prepare them for the same.

4. **FREE AVAILABLE ICT'S TO BE EXPLORED**
   Many Institutes like IISCs and IITs lecture presentations are available online. Inform them about the same. Also look for other freely available education programmes available on line.

5. **MORE SOFTWARE'S COULD BE DEVELOPED**
   Faculty and students of Computer Science related courses can develop softwares required for college to ease out the process of teaching, learning, evaluation, documentation, *etc*.

6. **STRENGTHENING RESEARCH AT UG LEVEL.**
   At Undergraduate level, research can be made compulsory. It can be either review of literature, surveys or practical related work.

WEAKNESSES

1. **CURRICULUM:**
   How UNIQUE is the curriculum? What are the STRENGTHS?
   UG & PG - revised every three / two years respectively … on what basis? What prompted the 'REVISION'?
   Is it done for the sake of revision? If not what supporting claims do you have?
   How many of the Papers are NEW OR what fraction of the Syllabus is NEW in the curriculum that is in vogue since last revision in each program? Has the syllabus been internationally validated?

2. **TEACHING – LEARNING:**
   What is the uniqueness?
   What fraction of the teaching – learning dynamics is ICT-enabled?
   Why not we encourage at least the bright students for the topping-up of skills through **ICT enabled parallel programs** – making use of free online Sourcing such as … *Coursera*, *edX* **…**

3. **E-LEARNING:**
   Is totally absent for the better part.
   It could be done through online tests, online submission of assignments, E-content generation: Ppts, Handouts, Teachers' collections, Question Banks, randomization of questions, Animations, recorded lecture classes …. Are appropriate software employed to check degree of plagiarism in the written assignments and/or dissertations?

4. **RESEARCH:** Has taken a very appreciable footing.
   There are 20 Research Centres - great thing!
   However, are they duly recognized by the University or any other Central body?

If not, these centres must share and pool their data with the parent department?

The expertise developed by these centres has not had any Value Addition to the parent department in terms of a) advanced Skills, and/or b) Diploma / Certificate program other than merely producing Ph Ds! How do we justify their existence as separate entities?

The infrastructure requires an urgent spruce-up!
The scholars deserve basic civic amenities (there are girls scholars also).

Information is missing about the availability of Online / E-resources (E-Journals such as Elsevier or Springer Group).

The financial share of the Management pooled into the research activity (over and above the support extended by funding agencies) is not made known.
With the generosity of the UGC readily funding Minor Research Projects, the entire faculty can be encouraged to be saturated with MRPs (especially the non-aided).

PUBLICATION might be better summarized as per Faculty and per Department with appropriate variables – Scopus index, Citation Index, Google Scholar, for SCI publications with Impact Factor, verify according to Thompson Reuters. A sizable number of publications (Journals), we are afraid, do not fall under the above categories.

5. **COLLABORATION IN TEACHING**:
   There is a dire resource optimization by way of bringing in inter-departmental collaboration in Teaching – especially among related departments (e.g. B Com, BBA & Corporate Secretaryship. Similarly Comp. Sci, IT & MCA ... all Self Supporting programs).
   The same could also be thought of while conducting Colloquia – Conference / Workshop / Seminar, *etc.*

   Conferences - National as well as International - must be in collaboration with likeminded departments within the College and neighbouring Institutes.
   The Conferences / Workshops may be done consistently (Annual) instead of the stand alone or 'one of' event as is done by certain departments.

6. **CONSULTANCY AND EXTENSION:**
   Is not SXC a Leader in this part of the State? But the faculty do not seem to justify! We understand they do play pivotal leadership in knowledge sharing with less fortunate institutions. Please encourage them have the records.

   NET Coaching efforts are quite laudable act, even though the results are not spectacular yet. The NET coaching could be revitalized by allowing students of neighbouring colleges as well as drawing teachers from them. This creates competition, which is lacking. Otherwise it looks inward and/or leading to inbreeding.

7. **OUTREACH - STAND:**
   Knowledge Transfer to the rural population is these days considered as a vital part of *service learning.* In order to accomplish that the students must be able to transfer their skills and knowledge gained specific to their sphere of learning. Instead all the students are engaged in the same type of common activity.

8. **BRIDGE COURSE – English and Subjects:**
   All the departments are claiming to be admitting *first generation* wards … under "preferential option for the poor". If so, these are the ones who need and deserve the Bridge Course! But the Course is crying for help. Bridge Course may be organized with a centralized structure.

   These students also require a sound knowledge of the subject basics, and hence the first Unit of all the Major Papers may have a 5-hour subject based Bridge Course.

9. **TEACHER EVALUATION FEEDBACK – Follow up:**
   The College Management has done the right thing in having done the feedback and evaluated it.

   It is high time some sort of Faculty Recharging is envisaged as follow up - such that the young faculty do not feel intimidated; rather a collective program may be designed such as to enhance their Communication, Self Esteem and Teaching Methods that is supplemented with modern teaching aids ….
   Appropriate software (… such as *KnowledgePro*) could be employed in order to automate the feedback too.

10. **SOFT SKILLS:**
    It is high time that the students are inducted into Soft Skills in an organized way – may be PG students to begin with as part of the curriculum. Any sincere effort outside of the curriculum may not be effective.

    Soft Skills and Bridge Course as obligate part make the curriculum **special** and **unique and** justify the concept of *preferential option for the poor*.

11. **PRESENTATIONS by Heads /Coordinators:**
    Here are some suggestions to improve the effect.

    a) Need not be always the Faculty Heads doing the presentation; the responsibility could be passed on to another person occasionally. Wherever the faculty strength is small the members could introduce themselves in two sentences.

    b) Faculty Profile as well as Student Profile can be made to appear smart -

c) The slides are too many. Please note the NAAC Peer Team comes and makes the visit after having read the SSR thoroughly. Hence the Presenter need not read all the contents displayed.

d) As far as possible, the info must be presented in crisp bullet form for better readability and effect.

e) Better understanding is required concerning the SWOC analysis.
Short-term as well as long-term future of the department must be fine-tuned… such as 5 years and 10 years.

CHALLENGES

1. **EVALUATION:** The formative evaluation (CIA) does not have an OBJECTIVE *online/OMR* testing component. It is high time we trained the rural youth in these modes of testing.
In the summative evaluation also many subjects have only a token fraction of OBJECTIVE type questions. This may eventually be raised to 40%.

2. **TUTOR** system must eventually evolve into **Mentoring** system. Sooner the better.

3. **PLACEMENT OFFICE** must seriously make attempt towards **Training** as well. Soft Skills as obligate part of the curriculum can be the best option.

4. **College as a whole** would do well if we think ahead concerning **Online Admissions**
Similarly, it would be a revolution if the campus is endowed with **WiFi.**

5. **ADMINISTRATIVE AUDIT:** The general staff (faculty as well as Assistants) and senior students (III UG & II PG) are allowed to give their feedback on the Administrators in GENERAL.

6. **ENERGY AUDIT:** The faculty of Botany and/or Zoology must undertake the green audit of the departments and campus – the carbon foot-printing, waste recycling & management, rain water harvesting, *etc.*

7. **GREEN AUDIT:** The Physics faculty can make an energy audit of the departments and campus – total energy consumption, energy conservation strategies suitable for the campus, quantum of energy that could be saved if 1) the lightings are switched over to CFL and/or LEDs, and 2) roof-top solar paneling is done, *etc.*

8. **LINK WITH ALUMNI:** This aspect tells greatly on 1) the student progression, and 2) your accreditation by the public at large. But most departments are falling back; they are yet to come up to the expected levels.

9. RESEARCH → PATENTS: The researchers and the scientists may be encouraged to target PATENTS as the deserved outcome of their research. The expertise developed by the 20 and odd Centres must deliver *Value Addition* to the parent department in terms of a) advanced Skills, and/or b) Diploma / Certificate program.

CONCLUSION

The Institution must aim at this goal. The concept of tread-milling is to retain the same place. What is the way forward to accomplish this goal? Is it possible to bring in the *School System?*

St Xavier's must aim at reaching *COLLEGE OF EXCELLENCE*, *DEGREE-AWARDING* … and beyond!

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